

life, Margaret Blackshere has been a true champion.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in an expression of appreciation to Margaret Blackshere for her years of dedicated service to the working men and women in Illinois and our nation and to wish her the very best in the future.

#### HONORING THE USA TAP DANCE TEAM ON THEIR SUCCESS AT THE WORLD TAP DANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

#### HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 30, 2007*

Ms. DeLAURO. Madam Speaker, it is with the greatest pride that I rise today to extend my sincere congratulations and very best wishes to the USA Tap Dance Team, based out of the Greater New Haven area, as they celebrate their tremendous success at the 2007 World Tap Dance Championships recently held in Reisa, Germany. In all, 51 dancers ranging in age from 10 to 20 years old made the trip and returned with a total of 11 medals! Our communities certainly have cause for celebration with the wonderful accomplishments of these young people.

Participating in three divisions, the USA Tap Dance Team has worked very hard over the last several months to be able to compete in this year's competitions. Coming together from across Connecticut and even New York, the dancers practiced for countless hours for solo, duo, small group, and formation events. The commitment these young people have demonstrated is truly inspiring. They have worked so hard to master the required high-level skills and the necessary symmetry of their movements.

I had the distinct honor of joining them for a very special evening as they prepared to leave for Germany and, as a former tap dancer myself, I was truly impressed with the level of dedication, passion, and talent of the team. It was this combination of drive and spirit that led to the team to come home with three gold medals, seven silver medals, one bronze medal, and several other finishing places—placing and medaling in each of three divisions—a remarkable showing!

I am also pleased to recognize the incomparable Gloria Jean Cuming for her outstanding leadership and instruction as well as the six choreographers who worked with the dancers and traveled to Germany with them. Their work with individuals and groups helped to secure this outstanding triumph. In addition, I would also extend a note of thanks and appreciation to the parents and volunteers whose support has enabled the dancers to practice and travel for their competitions. Without their efforts, the success of the USA Tap Dance Team would not be possible.

I am thrilled to stand today to join our local communities in extending my sincere congratulations to the USA Tap Dance Team on their great success at the 2007 World Tap Dance Championships. You have all made us proud!

#### A TRIBUTE TO MR. CARLOS LEZAMA—PRESIDENT EMERITUS OF THE WEST INDIAN AMERICAN DAY CARNIVAL ASSOCIATION

#### HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 30, 2007*

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life and legacy of Carlos Lezama, West Indian community leader who left this world at the age of 83 years and to enter into the RECORD an article in the Daily News by Bill Hutchinson entitled "West Indian Carnival Founder Carlos Lezama Dies at 83."

Carlos Lezama was born in Trinidad and spent his formative years on the island. He played the Cello and was nicknamed "Celloman" a name and position he enjoyed while working on a passenger ship before migrating to the USA in the early fifties. He joined the New York Metropolitan Transit Authority, in the mid-sixties. At NYTA he moved up steadily for the next twenty years until he became a Machinist. In 1989, he retired from that Agency.

Lezama long ago recognized the cultural significance of Carnival, since he played Mas' in Trinidad. When he came to New York he naturally gravitated towards the Carnival which took place in Harlem. In the mid-nineteen sixties, he directed his efforts to firmly establish Carnival in Brooklyn with his friend Rufus Goring, who brought the celebration to Brooklyn.

Under the stewardship of Lezama, the Brooklyn Caribbean Carnival grew from a five-block affair to the status of the largest outdoor parade in the United States. It attracts in excess of three million people on Eastern Parkway every year on the first Monday in September. Over the years the West Indian American Day Carnival Association has grown to a full-fledged community service organization and provides scholarships and a host of annual calendar events of cultural and educational events.

Lezama has been officially recognized and honored by scores of organizations, four New York State Governors (Govs. Rockefeller, Carey, Cuomo, and Pataki), and numerous awards from Mayors John Lindsay, Abe Beame, Ed Koch, David Dinkins and Rudy Giuliani for his efforts in promoting the rich culture of Caribbean people and thus enriching the cultural life of New York City. In 2001, the Carnival route—Eastern Parkway was renamed Carlos Lezama Parkway.

Even though Carlos Lezama passed away on January 22, 2007, his contributions to the diversity of the United States of America will continue to resonate through the Annual Brooklyn Carnival held each Labor Day Monday.

[From the New York Daily News]

WEST INDIAN CARNIVAL FOUNDER CARLOS LEZAMA DIES AT 83

(By Bill Hutchinson)

Carlos Lezama, who transformed the West Indian American Day Carnival from a five-block affair into one of the city's biggest events, died yesterday. He was 83.

Lezama, a retired machinist for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, died at Kings County Hospital after a brief illness.

"Throughout our lives, my siblings, as well as my mother, have been privileged to share

my father with the millions who are part of the carnival family," said Lezama's daughter, Yolanda Lezama-Clark.

"I am grateful that he has left an impressive legacy of which we all as Caribbean people can be proud," added Lezama-Clark, president of the West Indian American Day Carnival Association.

Born in Trinidad, Lezama grew up playing the steel pan and the cello, garnering the nickname "Celloman" while working on a cruise ship.

When he immigrated to America, he gravitated to the annual carnival event in Harlem. In the mid-1960s, he and a friend, Rufus Goring, brought the celebration to Brooklyn, and in 1967 he was elected the first president of the carnival association.

"He was a major force with respect to the West Indian Day parade, which now has millions of people," former Mayor Ed Koch said of Lezama yesterday. "It's really not a parade. It's a mass of people, having a great time together."

Former Mayor David Dinkins said it was Lezama's "vision and foresight" that turned the parade into a city cultural icon.

"I thought he was terrific," Dinkins said. "He had a drive, he was determined that the parade was going to go off and he didn't particularly care about the politics of it. I thought he did a great job."

Besides his daughter, Lezama is survived by his son, Kenwyn; four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

#### WATER QUALITY FINANCING ACT OF 2007

#### HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 30, 2007*

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, in 1972, the passage of the Clean Water Act secured the nation's commitment to rescuing our waters and expelling the pollutants that were killing our water supply and the wildlife that depended on it. Today, Mr. YOUNG, former Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, Chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Congresswoman ELLEN TAUSCHER, and I introduce bipartisan legislation that definitively renews our commitment to these waters and authorizes increased funding for wastewater infrastructure through a reauthorization of the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund program.

The Water Quality Financing Act of 2007 authorizes \$20 billion in Federal grants over five years to capitalize Clean Water State Revolving Funds. These funds provide low interest loans to communities for wastewater infrastructure. This bill also provides additional subsidies, including principal forgiveness and negative interest loans for communities that meet a state's affordability criteria, for individual ratepayers that will experience significant hardship from potential rate increases, and for the construction and implementation of innovative or alternative processes, materials, or technologies to meet the nation's wastewater treatment needs. It encourages long-term asset management planning and financing that will ensure sustainable systems and the potential to reduce overall capital and operation and maintenance costs and it promotes communities to consider alternative and innovative processes, materials, and technologies (including "green infrastructure") that